

Frozen Reality

by TheRedDragoon

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Summary: Getting kicked off the legendary council was the bad news. The good news was that Articuno could finally satisfy his curiosity about those strange creatures called human beings. Unfortunately, the first human the ice-type ran into was a young boy with a red cap and a disobedient Pikachu.

1. Author Notes

****Frozen Reality****

Author Notes

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><p>I am not really sure why I'm publishing this to be honest. It's a story that I have been meaning to write but have not yet got around to yet. By releasing this, I am going to gauge the level of desire a story like this would have. So, while I will probably write this eventually, if you want to see me update, please review or send me a PM telling me that you would be interesting in seeing this continue. Otherwise, this story may not see an update for a year or two. But then again, maybe I'll release something next week " if interest is high, that is a much greater possibility. However, I am currently writing a How to Train Your Dragon piece called Lightning Always Strikes Twice and am going to be focusing most of my time on that.<p>

Now, this story is strongly AU. I have not seen the anime in many years and have only ever seen the first season " I have also only ever played the first two generations of games so I would have a hard time naming the newer critters. This means that I will miss some factual information that was deduced later on. So to help with some confusion, I will explain lightly how things work: In this tale, there is only one of every single legendary and they are part of a council; this council is run by Arceus and is what maintains the

natural processes of the world. The genders for the legendaries are preordained as to how they view themselves. I decided to make Articuno male simply because every instance of this Pokémon I have seen has decreed it female.

The plot bunny for this story came because there is so little work done on the three legendary birds " there is so much intriguing potential in these three winged legends that I would like to see explored more.

That's all for now, so please hit that next button if you have not already hit that little X.

I do not own anything related to pok mon and everything used here within is simply for entertainment purposes only; no profit of any kind will be made in the use of this article. If someone desires to use the ideas contained here, they are free to do so, but this author would appreciate credit if appropriate.

The cover image is a modified from the original version created by themutant: the original piece is titled Blizzardy Articuno.

2. A Vacation?

****Frozen Reality****

Prologue " A Vacation?

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><p>The rising sun caused a cascade of colors to explode over a nearby ridge. The light illuminated the pervasive clouds in all manners of reds and yellows looking like some strange god-powered kaleidoscope. It was beautiful and breathtaking " something that would cause most to stop and bask in its ethereal glory if only for a short while.<p>

Unfortunately for a red, green and gold phoenix, it was nothing the pok mon hadn't seen a million times before.

Sighing, the large bird closed his eyes thinking about the events that occurred the previous day. Keeping his eyes tightly shut, Ho-Oh felt the heat from the sun hit his feathers. However, instead of feeling warm, the sensation felt less cold " one of the effects of being a fire-type.

Interrupting his tranquility, a voice rang out from the sky " an air of desperation and confusion mixed among its usual harmonic tones, "Ho-Oh, I need to speak with you!"

Opening his red eyes, Ho-Oh watched the incoming creature carefully. The perpetrator was a light blue bird that stood around the height of the average human. Gorgeous feathers lined up with aesthetic symmetry on the creatures wings; there was also miniscule, puffy white feathers on its chest that looked like a small coat of fur. Three large turquoise-colored crown feathers adorned the Pok mon's head giving it a regal and authoritative presence. Most uniquely was the creatures tail: the long smooth, ribbon-like tail was predominantly blue with a large streak of white down the middle, but what was most

impressive was the length; the tail was longer than the bird was tall.

Narrowing his eyes and lightly flexing his wings, Ho-Oh responded to the creature's outcry in a raspy voice, "I was wondering if I would see you here today, Articuno."

With beautiful grace and talented precision the bird, Articuno, landed next to the much larger Ho-Oh and folded his wings calmly. Articuno also pulled up his tail and coiled it carefully behind himself " Ho-Oh often wondered how annoying such a long train-like appendage must be.

Ho-Oh watched Articuno close his eyes and lift a wing over his chest; his chest was rising and falling with large periodic breaths that caused the white chest feathers to move out-of-place. After a moment, the bird reopened his eyes and focused his powerful gaze on the large firebird. Ho-Oh watched the red irises carefully; they were similar to his own and gave off a sense of wisdom and elitism.

"Oh? And why would you expect that?" Articuno's voice was slightly choppy and rushed; the bird was still breathing heavily.

Ho-Oh shrugged and turned away from the ice-type pok  mon. "Well, it's not every day that one of us gets kicked off the legendary council. I figured that you would talk to someone, but deemed Lugia a more likely candidate."

A large and voracious outtake of breath exploded from the smaller pok  mon sounding like a mixture between laughter and a sigh. "Yeah, I did try to find Lugia, but you know how he can be."

Ho-Oh lightly chuckled as a small smile rose on his features.

Articuno continued on, "So instead I came looking for you. You're boring enough that I knew you wouldn't be preoccupied."

Ho-Oh's smile disappeared. "Why didn't you talk with your sisters instead?"

It didn't even take a second for Articuno to erupt in a short burst of incredulous laughter. The bird's feathers fluffed up, and he looked at the fire-type with disbelief.

Ho-Oh rolled his eyes and ruffled his feathers slightly. "Okay, I know the two of them can be a little zealous." Ho-Oh watched Articuno's brow rise in exaggerated disbelief, "Fine, extremely zealous, but they are still your siblings. They should listen to you."

Articuno shook his head back and forth with tremendous passion. "Nope, they would rather make fun of my lack of masculinity than listen to me. Although," Articuno lifted a wing and rubbed the bottom of his beak, "now that I got kicked out of the council I'm sure they'll just use that as ammo for a while."

Ho-oh said calmly, "We'll you cannot deny-"

Articuno quickly interrupted the larger, avian Pok  mon with his

voice increasing in both speed and volume, "I am in no mood to discuss my femininity today Ho-oh." Taking a deep breath, Articuno paused to get his bearing; his crown feathers standing straight up like the honor guard of the military. After a moment the bird started speaking again, this time slower, "What I do want to know is why the heck I got kicked off the council." Articuno slammed one of his talons down on the ground. "It happened faster than Cresselia and Darkrai get into an argument, and there was no warning signs. It makes no sense."

"I might have an idea, but I can only talk about it to fellow members of the legendary council." Even if he could have, Ho-oh wouldn't have stopped his smirk from forming.

Articuno screeched in rage. "Tell me Ho-oh! I worked my butt off to finish all my duties for Arceus â€" more so than my lazy sisters ever did. And I'm the one that gets kicked out, it makes no-"

Ho-oh stepped forward and used his wings to hold Articuno's beak shut. A flash of surprise crossed the light blue bird's eyes that quickly morphed into rage. Before Articuno could do something he would regret, Ho-oh started to speak, "You're worrying about it too much. Think of this as a vacation, you have no duties that you have to perform for Arceus." Ho-oh smiled down at the bird, "Do something that you have always wanted to. You're still young," Ho-oh paused, "well, relatively young at leastâ€"there must be something that you always dreamed of doing." The large bird released the younger's beak and stepped back.

Articuno didn't respond and instead watched the rapidly blossoming sunrise. His feathers started to droop on his wings, and his crown feathers fell down over the top of his face. Eventually, the ice-type pokÃ©mon broke the silence, "I'm not sure that Lugia would let me do what I want â€" he's always asking me to do random stuff for him."

Ho-oh let out short bark-like sound. "If there is anyone that can't give you crap for taking a vacation it's Lugia. He went and made his own family during a break Arceus gave him."

The ice bird smiled and chuckled lightly, but his crown feathers didn't perk back up.

Ho-oh sighed. "Articuno, I know you're not stupid. Lugia is a member of the illustrious legendary council and a stickler for rules. In fact, I don't think he has ever broken one of Arceus' guidelines. Now that you are not a member, you are considered a free being in the world, just like normal pokÃ©mon and human beings are."

The light blue bird perked up and turned to face Ho-oh, his eyes sparkling and a smirk on his beak. "And members of the legendary council are not supposed to infringe the rights of the free beings of the world."

Ho-oh chuckled and winked at the ice-type. "Correct. The other members of the council might be making plans involving you, but Lugia is much too nice and moral to ever, purposely, repress your supposed rights."

"What about you? Are you making plans involving me?" Articuno said,

voice strong but laced with small discrepancies of uncertainty.

The response was immediate, "Of course."

Articuno chuckled nervously. "Nothing bad I hope."

"I guess you'll just have to wait and see." Ho-Oh shrugged, "I already told you, I don't tell non-council members anything involving my plans."

A shrill screech arose from Articuno's beak, and he pointed a wing at the phoenix, "Do not remind me. Besides, you wouldn't tell me even if I were still a member."

Ho-Oh bobbed his head up and down subconsciously, "That is true."

"Although that reminds me of something I wanted to ask you." Articuno carefully stretched out his wings. His eyes observed the appendages before quickly flashing white as a coat of ice formed on his wings. With the rising sun, the reflection off his wings was so bright that they sparkled more so than fresh snow and looked more like those twinkle lights that humans used â€" although with slightly less intensity. "How is being kicked out of the council going to affect my powers and abilities?"

Ho-Oh rapidly blinked his eyes and looked away from the light blue wings. He spoke with wisdom and confidence, "Your power itself will not change. You'll likely have more difficulty creating storms, influencing ocean currents, or any other natural events now that you no longer have Arceus permission to manipulate such things." Ho-Oh paused and looked out of the corner of his eyes noticing that the ice was starting to fall off the ice-types wings in large chunks.

Impatient, Articuno shook his wings and caused the rest of the ice to spray outward â€" almost like a Growlithe shaking the water from their fur. Some of the barrage flew out and lightly smacked Ho-Oh on his face and body. The firebird gave a warning glare that caused Articuno to sheepishly chuckle and back up slightly, his sharp talons kicking some of the larger pieces on the ground.

Seeing his chance, Ho-Oh spewed out a small bit of fire and hit the majority of the ice right on the money; the ice evaporated completely with steam rising like gas from a koffing. Ignoring the screeching Articuno, who fell over in his haste to get away from the flame, Ho-Oh continued speaking, this time with frustration mixed into his voice, "The only other thing that would be affected is your ability to learn other elements."

Articuno, who was currently sprawled out on the dirt with some brown spots marring his otherwise crystalline light-blue wings, intelligently said, "Huh?"

Ho-Oh breathed out heavily and smacked his head with a wing. "You're a flying and ice-type pokÃ©mon so for you to learn moves and abilities from other specializations is difficult. With exposure to Arceus, pokÃ©mon find doing so much easier. Now, because you have been cut off from her, you will have a much more difficult time learning something from a different school."

Articuno stood back up and looked at Ho-Oh before saying, quite happily, "Oh, I don't really care about that. The only thing I ever learned out of my specialization was telepathy. After all, I needed some way safe to scare humansâ€œ"

Suddenly, Articuno's feathers perked up, and he hopped toward Ho-Oh on his talons with his face full of excitement, "Hey that's a good idea!"

Ho-Oh leaned back and asked with careful disposition, "What's a good idea?"

"Well you told me to do something that interests me right?" Ho-Oh nodded his head as he listened to the exuberant voice of the young legendary, "Well, I've always wanted to learn more about people. They're just so," Articuno waved his wings around as he searched for a word, "weird."

Ho-Oh blinked once, then twice. "People? Like human people? Why would you ever want anything to do with them?"

Articuno stopped bouncing and examined Ho-oh with calculating red eyes, "I thought you were supposed to be on the lookout for a pure-hearted human. Are you telling me that, in all your years, you have never seen one?"

Ho-Oh watched the ice-type for a few moments causing Articuno to squirm under his glare. Finally, he murmured in an undertone, his voice a ghost, holding memories of a long distant reminder, "Only once."

Ho-Oh rapidly shook his head before continuing with a much harsher tone, "Every time I think I find one, I watch as they fall and are corrupted by the very same dirty, terrible species that they are a part of. Human beings are but bags of skin and blood that hold nothing but deceit and evil intentions. Every once in a while you get a freak with a leak, but human society will quickly patch them up." Ho-Oh chuckled and said in a calmer tone, "Sorry for the terrible rhyme, but the point still stands. Humans are trouble and a disaster waiting to happen, period."

Articuno turned away from Ho-Oh and watched the land surrounding them. After a moment, he looked over his left wing at Ho-Oh and said in an unwavering voice, "I refuse to believe that all people are as bad as you or the council makes them out to be."

The rainbow pok  mon sighed and said with a small shake of his head, "The ignorance of the young. You will learn soon enough I am afraid."

Articuno ruffled up his feathers and glared at Ho-oh with narrowed eyes. "So why has Arceus let them live as long as he has?"

Ho-Oh rolled his eyes before speaking in a flat tone, "Because it's Arceus."

Without waiting for a reply, Ho-Oh spread his majestic wings and looked out toward the horizon. Holding still for just a second, the bird then jumped into the air, his muscles awakening with their use.

Moving his wings in careful motions, Ho-oh started to head out, his flight calm and meticulous.

The wind in the air was acting up. Normally wind felt like a river â€" while difficult to predict, it still followed guidelines and rules. Today, there was no logic to the winds motions; instead, it felt like an enraged Tyranitar, only defined by chaos and emotion.

Moving forward, Ho-Oh heard started cry behind him from his companion and felt his wings move into flight. It was always easy to know when Articuno was in the air â€" his wings created cold drafts that made flying annoying for any and all around him.

>Out of the corner of his eyes, Ho-Oh watched as Articuno caught up to him and matched his pace no more than a wing-length to his left.<p>

"Hold up Ho-Oh, I'm not-"

Ho-Oh swatted Articuno on the head with his cone-like tail. Articuno's ruby colored eyes flashed in surprise and the ice-type slowed down, falling behind Ho-Oh's flight. Content, the fire-type faced forward only to have Articuno pop up in front of him a second later. Slowing to a midair halt, Ho-Oh watched the smaller bird, who was wearing an expression of pure amusement. Articuno was always a good flier.

"That's the first time I have ever seen you hit someone with your tail. I must say, you're not very good at it," the light blue creature said.

Leaning his body to the left, Ho-oh flew around the annoying ice-type. Articuno continued to hover in the air, his wings taking large, slow flaps to keep himself level. Just as Articuno opened his beak, Ho-oh said, "Fly with me Articuno I wish for you to see something."

Tilting his head to the side, Articuno asked, "Oh and what could that possibly be?" His voice was calculating as if he was trying to see where Ho-Oh were going with his thoughts.

Ignoring the young legendary, Ho-oh continued on his flight knowing that he would be followed. Instead, his eyes turned toward the forest â€" a sea of green holding as many mysteries as the deep blue ocean. Due to his sharp vision, Ho-oh had no problem watching the inhabitants of the forest prepare for the day.

Unfortunately, a slightly shrill voice distracted him, "Hey wait a second!"

Glancing out of the corner of his eyes at Articuno, Ho-Oh wondered if there would ever be a time when the bird could just fly and take in the ambiance around him rather than always rushing to his destination in a flurry of feathers and ice.

"If I'm not doing my duties won't the world stray off balance?"

Ho-Oh replied in a tone flatter than a month old carbonated beverage, "No."

Articuno spoke again, this time with confusion mixed in with his words, "But why not?"

Ho-Oh sighed loudly and disdainfully. "This world was fine before you were here, it will be fine now that you are indisposed. The council already has plans to deal with your duties, don't worry about it."

Raising a wing to rub his beak, Articuno masterfully managed to stay in the air with only one wing. Ho-Oh would never admit it to the legendary, but the action impressed him. When Articuno finally did speak, his voice was not specifically directed anywhere. It was as if the bird was simply thinking out loud. "I can't let my sisters get one-up on me. I'll have to do something about that."

Rolling his eyes, Ho-Oh said, "They already have, as you so sophisticatedly put it, one-up on you kid. And I don't think picking a fight with them would be optimal for your health. Although," Ho-oh turned to Articuno with a spark of amusement dancing in his eyes, "it would be entertaining. Still, once they beat you, don't come crying to me with your crippled pride."

Articuno squawked in indignation and started screeching, quite hastily, about why and how he could easily defeat his sisters in combat. Ho-Oh simply ignored him "it was a speech he had heard before and had no desire to hear again. Instead, Ho-Oh turned his gaze toward the sea of trees below him. After only a few minutes, the dark green of the trees started to morph into a dull, dirty gray and brown. The change was so drastic; it was as if a splotch of paint was slapped over the forest.

Ho-Oh stopped, letting his wings smooth rhythm keep him in the air. He had no desire to get any closer to the abomination occurring at the edge of the forest. Not able to keep the snarl out of his voice he said, "We are here."

Articuno paused in his rant and looked around. Ho-Oh watched as Articuno's red eyes darted around the area. Finally the light blue bird, in a slow and wary voice said, "Ah okay, but why are we here?"

Ho-Oh, quite viciously, said, "Can you not see it?"

Slightly worried for his own well-being, Articuno flew backward from Ho-Oh subconsciously. "What the fires? Humans always make them, although I have no idea why"

A short round of hopeless chuckles fell from Ho-oh's beak. Looking around again, the firebird noticed that there were indeed small red marks through the forest clearings. "They make them to stay warm Articuno. But that's not what I was alluring to."

"Warm?" Articuno's face morphed into genuine confusion, "But why would they want to be warm? Being warm is terrible."

Ho-Oh found himself sighing yet again. "Humans, much like myself, happen to like the heat Articuno."

"Well maybe if they just-"

Ho-oh interrupted the legendary with a glare that would stop the dead and spoke in a commanding tone, "Just stop Articuno. Unlike you, I have things that I need to get done and am in no mood to argue with your asinine opinions." Eying the blank look on Articuno's face, Ho-Oh finally snapped. Quickly moving toward the, now scared legendary, Ho-Oh gripped his head with a wing â€" thankfully using Articuno's air buoyancy to prevent himself from falling â€" and forced the smaller blue bird to look toward the travesty.

Articuno took a second before speaking, but when he did his trepidation filled his voice, "Uh, the edge of the forest?"

"I take it all back, you're not intelligent at all." Ho-Oh shook his head back and forth in disappointment. "Ten days ago, that wasn't the edge of the forest."

Wiggling himself out of the firebird's grip, Articuno puffed up his feathers, clearly annoyed. "And how was I supposed to know that?"

Ho-Oh's gaze was not on the Icy-type legendary but rather watching the edge of the forest, sorrow rising to the top of his eyes. "All life is interconnected; what one aspect does affects another. This society of life is the most important thing in the world to protect. It works like a flame. Give the fire fuel and resources and it will explode with renewed vigor. Fill it instead with dirt and grime and the inferno will smother itself out." Turning his gaze toward Articuno, Ho-Oh paused to let the information sink in before continuing, "Humans are filth and grime and they will smother out the society of life if we let them."

Articuno rolled his eyes and said, "You already told me this Ho-Oh. And contrary to your misinterpretations I am smart enough to remember it the first time."

"Just remember what you have in this world Articuno. There is no need to risk it needlessly for some foolish quest or ideology. Humans are dangerous, period."

Articuno didn't move for a long time; just floated in the air with his wings slowly pumping up and down, watching the trees.

The forest was starting to come alive, the chatter of life rising from the night. The ambient sounds were beautiful and reinvigorating to Ho-Oh â€" something that the bird would never get bored of. Unfortunately, the deep and loud rumble of human machines interrupted the peace and tranquility.

It was then that Articuno finally spoke, "Perhaps you should take your own advice. I don't see humans as a plague but rather as an opportunity. If life is so amazing, then why are you so quick to pass judgment on who deserves it? Doesn't every being deserve it?" Articuno glared, and Ho-Oh saw the birds crown feathers stand up. "Remember that those whom you give no faith will show the most when it really matters â€" if only you give them the chance."

Ho-Oh blinked, processed the information and then laughed. His guffaws were louder and more enthusiastic than any the bird had given in the last hundred years. Finally, he settled down and looked at

Articuno, who had puffed up his feathers and was snidely holding his head up and looking toward the sky. Smiling Ho-oh said, "Articuno I think you need to hit ten thousand years of age before you can throw the wisdom card."

Articuno turned his glare toward the older legendary and said, "We shall see. I doubt you have spent any time, recently, around humans. I'll prove you wrong."

Without waiting for a response, Articuno stretched his icy wings and took off in the morning sunlight " the lights rays reflecting off of him and causing a spectacular sparkle to twinkle in his wake. However, Articuno did not take off toward the human's on the edge of the forest but rather headed in the opposite direction.

Watching the bird leave, Ho-Oh couldn't help the manipulative smirk that arose. Cheekily, he looked up into the sky and, as though he were speaking to someone specifically, said, "The first part of the plan was a complete success. The next part is up to you, and you best hope that it goes off without a hitch or your inane scheme will fail. And if it does, you have condemned us to our doom."

Suddenly, the edge of the forest turned bright orange and red with copious amounts of smoke rising into the sky. Ho-Oh watched, slightly mesmerized as the giant flames danced throughout the sky. So powerful was the fire, that even with his poor sense of smell, he was able to smell the burning wood with startling clarity. Even so, what disturbed him most was the terrified screaming that arose from the forest inhabitants " praying to Arceus to forgive them for whatever transgression they had performed.

Looking back toward the sky, Ho-Oh said one final thing, "You best hurry up; I fear that we are running out of time faster than we hoped for."

The flames burned on.

End
file.